

been carrying on the government of the country while leader of the Opposition. I was under the impression, Mr. Speaker, in my own humble way, that I have been carrying on the government of the country with the assistance of my colleagues."

Mr. Whitney said his charge was not that members of the Government had approached him, but he would say that he had been approached with reference to measures to be introduced by from a dozen to twenty of the leading Liberals of the Province, men of as high respectability as the members of the Cabinet. In reply to Mr. Ross, Mr. Whitney said the emissaries said they came from the Government.

The Premier replied that they did not speak correctly, for no such emissaries had been sent by the Government.

#### Mr. Preston Makes Explanation.

Mr. Preston (South Brant), also speaking on a question of privilege, said he

desired to make a personal explanation, in view of an incident which had occurred in the Public Accounts Committee in the morning. As the members knew, he was proprietor of a daily newspaper, with which there was connected a job printing department. When he became a member of the House he had given most positive instructions in the various departments that no work was to be done for the Government except the usual departmental advertising, which members were permitted to receive. It had been therefore a matter of surprise to him to ascertain that an item of some \$53 appeared in the public accounts as received by him for printing and stationery in connection with the butter and cheese exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition. He had not been aware until then that he had, directly or indirectly, any dealings whatever with the Government. Mr. Preston then explained the circumstances as given before the committee, showing that the work had been ordered by the Western Dairymen's Association, the Secretary of which lived in Brantford, but the Government having promised certain aid in connection with the exhibit, the account had been sent by the association to the department for payment. So far as his office was concerned they had had no arrangements or dealings with anyone other than the association. "Since the matter was called up in committee by the member for South Lanark (Col. Matheson)," Mr. Preston concluded, "I have placed my position before the Attorney-General and other legal gentlemen of the House. Their unanimous opinion is that there is nothing in connection with the account which violates either the spirit or the letter of the independence of Parliament act, that I had no contract, directly or indirectly, with the Government or any

department thereof. I make this explanation here, fully and frankly, because I would not stay in this House five minutes if there is any reasonable doubt of my right to stay here."

Mr. Whitney said he did not propose to offer any suggestion as to whether the position of the hon. gentleman as a member of the House had been affected. He supposed the fact that he had received a Government check as remuneration for work done would have some bearing. The matter might be considered, and if there was any doubt as to Mr. Preston's position he presumed his hon. friend would know what to do.

Premier Ross observed that if any complaint were made the proper course would be to refer the question to the Committee on Privileges and Elections. The matter then dropped.

#### Precedence After This Week.

Premier Ross moved that on and after Wednesday (to-day) Government business take precedence. The object was merely to facilitate the work of the session. The Government legislation was all down, with the exception of the redistribution bill and the railway subsidy bill, which were almost ready.

Mr. Whitney suggested that Monday next be substituted for Wednesday, and with this amendment the motion passed.

#### Government Railway Bill.

Hon. Mr. Latchford, in moving the second reading of the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway bill, said the extent and possibilities of the Temiskaming district were well known to the House. There were about 1,000,000 acres of good land at the head of the lake, of which about half were surveyed into 24 townships, while farther to the north and west was a vast area of 16,000,000 acres, covered with a dense growth of spruce, estimated at 280,000,000 cords. To the south was Lake Temagami, whose scenery was probably unsurpassed in the world. It appeared that North Bay was the most desirable starting point. To build from Mattawa would be to encounter enormous engineering difficulties, with bluffs from 600 to 1,200 feet high, besides paralleling the line on the Quebec side. Then at North Bay connection would be had with the main line of the C.P.R. and with the Grand Trunk to the south, and with the Canada Atlantic to Ottawa and the Georgian Bay and with the Georgian Bay Canal. The railway would be built by a commission of not less than three and not more than five, the cost to be borne by the land through which the line passed. In answer to Col. Matheson, Mr. Latchford said the length of the line would be about 106 miles, but it might be desirable at an early date

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